Hardships caused to tribals due to establishment of firing range in Bihar

50. SHRI S. S. AHLUWALIA : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the newsreport captioned "Tribals in Army's line of firing", published in the Times of India, New Delhi, dated the 12th November, 1993 ;

(b) if so, what is the reaction of Government thereto ; and

(c) the details of the projects being implemented/contemplated, if any, to mitigate the hardships of the poor and ignorant tribals of Palamau and Gumla in Bihar caused by establishment of the Army Firing Range, and also to make good the ecological distortion it is causing to the region ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI MALLIKARJUN) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) Netarhat field firing range is a notified range near Ranchi (Bihar) which is in use by the Army since 1956. It is necessary for the Army to have a range in the Eastern part of the country so that large scale Army movement is avoided. Setting up of permanent field firing ranges in Netarhat is required from the same view point. Hence preliminary action for acquisition of land has been started. Acquisition of land proposed for this range has been kept to the minimum. As always, compensation will be paid as per the rates laid down by the State Govt., by notification, to individuals who are rendered unemployed for the duration of firing. To maintain the ecological balance in the region, Army authorities have to arrange for compensatory afforstation as required under the guidelines laid down by the Ministry of Environment and Forests.

Anomalies in soliders' pay

51. SHRI SURESH PACHOURI : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether attention of Government has been drawn to the Press Reports which appeared in the Times of India dated the 3rd September, 1993 regarding anomalies in Indian Soldiers' Pay ;

(b) if so, what are the main reasons of anomalies in the pay of Indian soldiers ;

(c) whether Goverment are considering to remove the anomalies of pay structure of Non-Commissioned Officers and other ranks of the Indian-UN Contingent ; and

(d) if so, by what time these anomalies would be removed ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI MALLIKARJUN) : (a) to (d) The Government have seen the Press Report in the Times of India on the 3rd September, 1993. This report does not give the correct position. The troops on deputation to the various UN Peacekeeping Missions are paid Overseas Allowance over and above the salary drawn by them in India. The rates of Overseas Allowance, which have been standardised for deputation to all the UN Missions, apply uniformly to the personnel according to rank. Thus all the Commissioned Officers from Second Lieutentnt to Brigadier are paid Overseas Allowance of US dollars 2190 per month ; the Junior Commissioned Officers are paid US dollars 1640 per month and the Non-Commissioned Officers and Other Ranks from Sepoy to Havaldar Major are paid US dollars 730 per month.

There is no anomaly in the rates of Overseas Allowance sanctioned to our troops sent on deputation to the UN Missions abroad.

Jet trainers for Indian Air Force

52. SHRI SHIV PRATAP MISHRA :
SHRI RAMDAS AGARWAL :
SHRI P. UPENDRA :

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether Govermment have taken any decision to purchase a jet trainer for

Indian Air Force, if so, the details thereof; and

(b) whether any talks were held in this regard during the recent visit of Mr. Douglas Hurd, Foreign Secretary of U.K.?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI MALLIKARJUN): (a) Acquisition of Advanced Jet Trainer for Indian Air Force has been accepted by the Government and on the basis of detailed technical evaluation of proposals from shortlisted vendors, a Committee has been constituted to negotiate the purchase proposals.

(b) This subject was raised by the Foreign Secretary of U.K. Mr. Douglas Hurd during his recent visit to India. He was informed that the matter is under consideration.

Attempted rape by army jawans

53. SHRI V. GOPALSAMY: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the attention of Government has been drawn to news item captioned "Jawans' bid to rape two school girls" appearing in Indian Express dated 17th August, 1993; and

(b) if so, what action Government have initiated on the army jawans?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI MALLIKARJUN): (a) Yes, Sir. 2 NCO's had been identified.

(b) Disciplinary proceeding have been initiated against them.

Opening of new Defence Production Units

54. SHRI S. AUSTIN: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government propose to open some new defence production units during the Eighth Five Year Plan period in Tamil Nadu;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the details of such units approved for Bihar?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI MALLIKARJUN): (a) There is no proposal at present to set up new defence production unit anywhere in India including Tamil Nadu.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

Utilisation of vacant land in cantonments

55. SHRI CHIMANBHAI HARIBHAI SHUKLA:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to dispose of or otherwise gainfully utilise the vacant land in cantonments and those in possession of the various departments under his Ministry;

(b) if so, how much of such lands has been identified; and

(c) what are the precise plans for utilizing or disposing of the same?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI MALLIKARJUN): (a) to (c) There has been a continuing policy that lands rendered permanently surplus to Defence requirements will be disposed of by sale on realisation of market value to various agencies in the following order of preference:

(i) Other Ministries of Central Government.

(ii) State Governments.

(iii) Local bodies.

(iv) Educational and Charitable Institutions.

(v) Ex-Serviceman (individual plots only for residential purpose.

In case none of the above agencies responds to the offer, the surplus Defence